

Strengthening Teacher Quality and Support: Next Steps for Arizona

A Progress Report

**Governor's Committee for
Teacher Quality and Support**

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This report is an accounting of the work of the Governor's Committee for Teacher Quality and Support from June through December 2005.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	2
WHY A TQS COMMITTEE.....	3
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT DATA	3
DATA RELATED TO THE ENVIRONMENT FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING	4
PREVIOUS REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	6
STEPS TAKEN TO IMPROVE TEACHER QUALITY AND SUPPORT	7
SUMMARY	9
RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE GOVERNOR’S COMMITTEE FOR TEACHER QUALITY AND SUPPORT.....	10
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS	11
TEACHER COMPENSATION RECOMMENDATIONS	16
NEXT STEPS.....	19
REFERENCES	21
CONTACT PERSONS FOR ARIZONA INITIATIVES CITED IN THIS REPORT	23
APPENDIX A: EXECUTIVE ORDER 2005-11 AND 2005-23	24
APPENDIX B: TEACHER QUALITY AND SUPPORT MEMBERSHIP LIST	28
APPENDIX C: LIST OF INDIVIDUALS ADDRESSING THE COMMITTEE FOR TEACHER QUALITY AND SUPPORT	30
APPENDIX D: NSDC STANDARDS FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT, (REVISED, 2001).....	31

INTRODUCTION

This document is a progress report. It sets forth the first set of recommendations from the Governor's Committee on Teacher Quality and Support (TQS). These recommendations focus primarily on establishing quality professional development for educators and increasing teacher compensation.

This committee was established through Governor Janet Napolitano's signing of Executive Order 2005-11 on May 4, 2005 (and amended by Executive Order 2005-23 on August 18, 2005). *[Note: See Appendix A.]* The charge to the committee was to recommend a series of actions that would modernize compensation, college preparation, and professional opportunity and development for teachers in Arizona. The committee was to consist of 20 members from the education and business communities across Arizona. *[Note: See Appendix B.]* Members are appointed by the Governor and are to serve without compensation for staggered two-year terms. The Governor designated Dr. John Haeger, President, Northern Arizona University, as the chair for the first year. An on-going group, the committee was to report its first set of recommendations for action or additional study by December 1, 2005 and every September thereafter.

The Committee met 11 times from June through December. Agenda items consisted of presentations by experts in professional development, compensation, or teacher preparation with discussion following. *[Note: See Appendix C for a list of individuals who spoke to the committee.]* In the later sessions, the committee formulated and reviewed draft recommendations. Throughout the process, the group solicited comments from interested educators and the public at large. During the five months, the committee focused primarily on professional development and, to a slightly lesser extent, teacher compensation. The group functioned largely as a committee of the whole, occasionally assigning a task to a sub-committee of members. Meetings were held in committee members' facilities in the Phoenix area and in Flagstaff. Meetings ranged from two to four hours in length.

This report presents the first set of recommendations. The recommendations suggest some initial steps to establish quality professional development and improve teacher compensation. They are not meant to be complete. The committee is well aware of the inter-relationships between and among teacher preparation, professional development, and teacher compensation. As the group delves further into teacher compensation and begins exploring teacher preparation, other recommendations will be forthcoming. The goal is not to "tinker" with the educational system as it now exists but to make recommendations that have the potential of leading to statewide, systemic reform.

This report first presents a rationale for the Governor's establishing the committee. Next are 13 recommendations related primarily to professional development and teacher compensation. The final section on next steps presents several actions that the Governor and others can take to begin implementation.

WHY A TQS COMMITTEE

Arizona is not where it needs to be. A review of data reflecting the educational achievement of Arizona's students as well as teacher quality and supports reveals that much needs to be done.

Student Achievement Data

Achievement According to NAEP: One of the premier indicators, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) for 2005, shows the following:

In reading, the percentage of fourth grade students scoring at the proficient level or above was 24%. This was not significantly different from that in 2003 (23%) or in 1998 (21%). At the eighth grade, the percentage of students performing at the proficient level or above was 23%. This percentage was not significantly different from the one in 2003 (25%) and was lower than that in 1998 (27%).

In looking at results by race or ethnic group, the difference between the scores of fourth grade Black and Hispanic students was 31 points lower than the average score of White students. At the eighth grade level, the difference in scores of Black and Hispanic students as compared to White was 15 points.

In mathematics, the percentage of fourth grade students scoring at the proficient level or above was 28%. The percentage in 2003 was not significantly different (25%) and was greater than that in 1992 (13%). For eighth graders, the percentage of students performing at or above the NAEP proficient level was 26%. This was greater than that in 2003 (21%) and that in 1990 (13%).¹

In looking at results by race or ethnic group, Black and Hispanic fourth graders had an average score that was 25 and 24 points, respectively, lower than that of White students. That difference for eighth grade Black and Hispanic students was 27 and 28 points, respectively (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2005).

Vital Statistics for Arizona

Number of school districts: 234
Number of public schools: 1,931
Number of charter schools: 504
Pre-K-12 enrollment: 1,012,068
Number of public school teachers: 47,507
Minority students: 51%
Children in poverty: 20%
Students with disabilities: 10.8%
English-language learners: 15.4%
Per pupil expenditures: \$5,278

Sources: Arizona Department of Education; "State of the States," Education Week's Quality Counts, 1/4/2006; Arizona State Board for Charter Schools, 2005; NAEP State Profiles, 5/4/2005; nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/states/profile.asp

¹ NAEP has three levels of basic, proficient, and advanced.

Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS): In looking at the reading and mathematics performance of fourth and eighth graders, there are significant percentages of students who are not meeting standards as measured by the state's own assessment.

In reading, at the fourth grade level, 68% of the students met or exceeded standards while 31% fell far below or were approaching standards. In mathematics, 74% of the fourth graders met or exceeded standards while 26% were either far below or approaching standards.²

At the eighth grade level, performance drops in both subjects. In reading, 67% of the students met or exceeded standards while 33% fell far below or were approaching standards. In mathematics, 63% were at or above standards; 37% fell far below or were approaching standards.

In both subject areas at the fourth and eighth grade levels a substantial gap exists between the percentages of White and Asian students performing at or exceeding standards as compared to the percentages of Hispanics, Blacks, and Indians doing so. (Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards, 2005)

The NAEP and AIMS data both show that student achievement, and especially that of Arizona's students of color, is lagging. The underlying purpose of strengthening teacher quality and support is, of course, to improve student achievement. Reform simply cannot happen unless teachers are prepared to deliver quality instruction. The tasks of recruiting, preparing, and hiring teachers and providing quality working conditions throughout their professional careers are to enable them to deliver high quality instruction.

Data Related to the Environment for Teaching and Learning

There are also factors relating to teacher conditions that signal the need for greater teacher support and improved teacher quality:

- Arizona ranked next to last in per pupil expenditures in 2005. Only 13% of the state's students are in districts that spend at or above the national average (Quality Counts, 2005). There is a relatively high degree of disparity in funding across the school districts in the state (Quality Counts, 2006).
- The average class size in elementary school is 24.5, the highest in the nation (Quality Counts, 2005).
- The state does not pay for professional development for teachers. There is no dedicated funding source for professional development³ (Quality Counts, 2005).
- Arizona does not publish the teacher-testing passing rates of the graduates of its teacher preparation programs, a measure of accountability (Quality Counts, 2005).

² AIMS has four categories.

³ Some monies from Proposition 301 and the Instructional Improvement Fund's gaming money may be used for professional development, but these are supplemental revenues outside of the state funding formula.

Neither does the state require high school and middle school teachers to major in the subjects that they intend to teach (Quality Counts, 2006).

- Arizona received its lowest marks (second-to-last in the nation) in improving teacher quality (Quality Counts, 2006).
- There is a very “delicate balance” that exists in terms of teacher supply and demand, and teacher shortages exist in specific regions (e.g., rural) and in subject areas (e.g., special education and language instruction for non-English speaking students) (Gau, Palmer, Melnick, & Heffernon, 2003).
- The average salary for Arizona teachers is 118.0% of the average annual pay of all workers in 2003. The highest for any state is 141.9%, and the average is 122.7% (Morgan Quitno Press, 2005).
- The average teacher salary in the state is \$41,843, a ranking of 28 out of 50 in 2003-2004 (National Education Association, 2003 & 2004). However, this average is skewed by the higher pay in large urban and suburban districts (Arizona Education Association Research and Development Center, 2005).

Since there is no policy or requirements for professional development at the state level, there is no infrastructure for supporting professional development. Since there is no infrastructure, there are no data regarding the extent or type of professional development offered, amount of money spent, or the quality or impact of any offerings statewide. As such, Arizona is not positioned to respond to or help local districts respond to the No Child Left Behind requirement of evaluating professional development for its impact on teacher effectiveness and improved academic performance (No Child Left Behind Act, 2001).

In 2005, Morgan Quitno Press put Arizona at the bottom of all 50 states. This rating was based on 21 indicators including the following:

- High school graduation rate,
- High school drop out rate,
- Per pupil expenditures,
- Percentage of students scoring proficient or higher on the National Assessment of Educational Progress,
- Average teacher salary,
- Average class size, and
- Median pupil-teacher ratio.

Arizona’s rating in the previous four years has ranged from 44 to 47, so the state has consistently been at the bottom in comparison to all other states.

In spite of the data that do not reflect well on the state, a number of positive measures have been taken:

- According to the American Federation of Teachers, Arizona has well-written standards in the four main subject areas of English, mathematics, science, and social studies/history at each level: elementary, middle, and high school. In addition, state

standards in English and mathematics are aligned to assessment at the elementary, middle school, and high school levels (Quality Counts, 2005 and 2006).

- Arizona received its highest mark in standards and accountability (Quality Counts, 2006).
- The state has a system of open enrollment and one of the strongest charter school laws in the nation (Quality Counts, 2005). The state's charter school law has received the highest-possible rating from the Center for Education Reform (Quality Counts, 2006).

Previous Reports and Recommendations

Over the past few years a number of reports have called for the following reforms to strengthen teacher quality and support and to improve the achievement of the state's students. The report from the Governor's Task Force on Efficiency and Accountability in K-12 Education (Koehler, 2001), put forth suggestions on alignment of curricula, increased accountability, a teacher pay-for-performance system linked to student achievement, and direction of more financial resources to student achievement.

A Pre-K-12 Education: Choices for Arizona's Future report from an Arizona Town Hall in 2004 stressed, for example, the early identification of students at risk, aligning instruction with knowledge and skills needed in the workplace and for entry into higher education, engaging parents as partners in the education of their children, and identification of best practice for teaching non-English language learners. The report also suggested a starting salary for beginning teachers of \$35,000 with advancement to \$50,000 early in their careers.

The most recent report, *Lead with Five: Five Investments to Improve Arizona Public Education* (Waits & Fulton, 2005), recommended providing full-day kindergarten, preparing and recognizing teachers for high performance, creating smaller schools, reducing class size in K-3, and providing extra help for students experiencing difficulty.

Although not all of these recommendations from these reports have been implemented, they are nevertheless viable suggestions, many of which are still being explored.

The committee also reviewed *Recommendations for Improving Teacher Quality*. This document includes a synopsis of recommendations appearing most frequently in 21 reports, articles, and other publications on improving teacher quality.⁴ It was prudent for the committee to review these sources as members did not wish to recreate the wheel but to bring to bear in Arizona those policies and programs that have garnered broad-based support for their effectiveness within the state and elsewhere. The committee's recommendations are in line with those suggested in these state and national publications.

It is not at all unusual in education for a recommendation to be suggested in different reports before it is finally adopted. Adoption may finally occur perhaps because of

⁴ For a copy of this informal compilation, contact Bhill@az.gov.

development of a critical mass of support, a change in political climate, a budget surplus, a turnover in personnel, or other reasons.

Definition of a Quality Teacher

A Quality teacher at any level is passionate about student learning; possesses comprehensive knowledge of what is taught; understands how students learn and develop cognitively, physically, socially and emotionally; and demonstrates the ability to apply his or her own knowledge so that every student may develop dispositions that lead to a love of learning and the desire to become successful and productive members of a democratic society.

Source: Teacher Education Partnership Commission, "A Quality Teacher: Pre-K and K-12," August, 2005.

Steps Taken to Improve Teacher Quality and Support

In the past few years, Arizona has taken several substantial steps to strengthen teacher quality and support across the state, all, of course, with the ultimate goal of improving student achievement. Here is a brief discussion of five initiatives; contact persons for each of the programs are listed after the references.

Arizona's Career Ladder: The Career Ladder is a program of advancement for teachers that started in 1984 as a five-year pilot. Since then, 28 districts (encompassing about one third of all teachers in the state) have adopted the program. The Career Ladder is based on the following: developing a higher level of teaching skills and responsibility, increased student achievement, professional development, and equal pay for equal performance. Data from the

latest research study (Sloat, 2002) show that students in the Career Ladder districts out-

List Of Districts Participating In The Career Ladder Program

Agua Fria, Amphitheater, Apache Junction, Catalina Foothills, Cave Creek, Chandler, Crane, Creighton, Dysart, EVIT, Flagstaff, Flowing Wells, Ganado, Kyrene, Litchfield, Mesa, Patagonia UHSD, Payson, Pendergast, Peoria, Safford, Santa Cruz Valley, Scottsdale, Show Low, Sunnyside, Tanque Verde, Tolleson, Window Rock

*Source: Arizona Department of Education,
www.ade.az.gov/schoolfinance/Reports/CareerLadder_OPIP*

performed students in non-Career Ladder districts in reading, mathematics, and language in grades two through eight as measured on the Stanford 9.

***Governor Napolitano's
Master Teacher Program:***

This program places a Master Teacher in every school building, beginning with the poorest and most in need, starting in 2006-2007. The goal of the program is to improve teacher effectiveness and student achievement in districts with high poverty. The program will attain its goal through exemplary instruction, quality professional development, and dedicated mentoring and coaching for new teachers. After training in coaching, the Master Teacher's role will be to work with the faculty in his/her school to improve instruction. The selection and training is now in process for placing the first cohort in the fall of 2006.

AzTEP: Title II Grant:

Arizona Teacher Excellence Program (AzTEP) is a three-year U.S. Department of Education Title I: Teacher Quality Enhancement grant awarded to Governor Napolitano's office in September, 2003. The grant addresses the teacher shortage and high turnover in schools located on Arizona's Indian reservations and in former Enterprise Zones by funding the recruitment and retention of high quality teachers. More specifically, the project provides funding for

**Summary of Recommendations Designed to Improve
Teacher Quality**

The following is a summary of some of the recommendations gleaned from 21 reports, articles, or other publications on improving teacher quality. [Note: See footnote 4.] These two groupings address professional development and teacher compensation, the focus of this report.

Recommendations for improving professional development:

- Establish professional development as a regular component of the school program;
- Align professional development with state teaching and learning standards;
- Develop district and school professional development plans based on state, district, and school goals and teacher needs;
- Implement high quality professional development that is aligned with research and effective practice;
- Develop scheduling or staffing options (e.g., teaching teams) that will enable most professional development to take place during the school day; and
- Provide induction and mentoring programs for all new teachers.

Recommendations for strengthening teacher compensation:

- Provide starting salaries that are comparable to other professions with similar entry requirements;
- Establish career ladders so that teachers can advance to higher levels and be rewarded financially for their efforts;
- Provide incentives, especially higher pay, for teachers willing to work in rural, isolated areas or in high poverty schools;
- Base pay on performance, specifically "value added;"
- Determine whether there is a teacher shortage problem, or much more likely, a teacher retention problem; addressing each requires a different strategy; and
- Reduce bureaucratic hiring procedures in large districts; give principals the authority to make hiring decisions.

teacher preparation and recruitment, retention of both new and veteran teachers, and local professional development planning.

Governor's P-20 Council of Arizona: In the summer of 2005 Governor Napolitano appointed a P-20 council to explore ways that the state can achieve a “more effective, efficient, and equitable education pipeline” (Executive Order 2005-19). Some of the possible strategies include aligning high school, college, and work expectations; helping students meet high standards and prepare for either post-secondary education or workforce training after high school; providing high quality teachers, especially in mathematics, science, and literacy; and strengthening secondary and postsecondary accountability. The Governor expects the council to bring together education stakeholders from across the state and form a common vision and direction for education reform efforts in Arizona.

Teacher Pay-for-Performance Initiative: In 2000 the Arizona electorate passed Proposition 301, which called for pay-for-performance in all school districts in the state. The legislation provided for a six tenths of one percent sales tax increase with 20% of the monies going for base pay and 40% designated for performance pay. (The remaining 40% are discretionary funds for the district.) Over the past five years districts have developed plans, many of which are team or school based rather than individually based. Performance is measured by the success of a team or school rather than by single individuals.

Looking for more uniformity in plans, in August, 2005, the Arizona state legislature passed S.B. 1074 that calls for districts to develop systems that include the following: district and school performance, measures of academic progress, either dropout or graduation rates, attendance rates, rating of school quality by parents and students, and teacher and administrator input. The plan has to be approved by 70% of the teachers, and it must include an appeals process. Finally the plan must be evaluated on a regular basis. The districts must submit a copy of their performance-based compensation system and its evaluation plan annually to the Arizona Department of Education.

The passage of these two pieces of legislation, heralded by advocates of pay-for-performance across the country, provides school districts with an excellent opportunity to revamp salary schedules that have historically been based on the number of degrees and credit hours earned plus years of experience. However, this requires a cultural change, which is slow in coming. Also, the base salary in most Arizona districts is so low that the pay-for-performance systems cannot achieve any integrity, hence, the Governor's concern regarding compensation.

Summary

Considering the data outlined earlier in this section and the efforts that are underway, the Governor delineated three main areas that need immediate attention:

- Teacher development and lack of uniform access to quality professional development, mentoring, and induction;

- Pay disparities and compensation strategies to recruit and reward teachers; and
- Teacher preparation programs that need to update recruitment strategies and align preparation to Arizona's teaching and learning standards and state education laws.

Recommendations put forward in this preliminary report reflect the work of the committee from May 2005 to December 2005 only. The committee came to consensus on the 13 recommendations and forwarded those to the Governor with the understanding that its work would continue into 2006. Additional recommendations in all three areas (professional development and teacher compensation plus recruitment and teacher preparation) are likely to be forthcoming in the next report. The committee acknowledges that tasks stated in the Executive Order remain undone and is clearly committed to completing these as well as doing the additional work related to the recommendations listed in this report. According to terms of the Executive Order, the committee will submit a final report by September 2006.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE GOVERNOR'S COMMITTEE FOR TEACHER QUALITY AND SUPPORT

Thirteen Recommendations from the Governor's Committee for Teacher Quality and Support

Professional Development Recommendations

1. Adopt the National Staff Development Council's "Standards for Staff Development."
2. Establish within the State Board of Education a Professional Standards Board to oversee the policy development of the NSDC "Standards for Staff Development."
3. Study immediately the possibility of a comprehensive statewide Professional Standards Board. In addition to professional development, the scope of the board's responsibilities could include certification, licensure, oversight of the teaching standards, testing, teacher preparation, and recruitment. The committee shall study the scope and functions, structure, authority, timeline, and other implementation issues of a Professional Standards Board and forward a recommendation in 2006.
4. Phase in the professional development standards over time to allow the state to build the resources and infrastructure necessary to support schools and educators. The state should immediately provide technical assistance to help

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This section lists 13 recommendations. The first eight address primarily professional development. They include adoption and implementation of professional development standards in Arizona with the state assuming the major leadership role. There are five recommendations related to teacher compensation. They focus on establishing a minimum teaching salary across the state and providing a variety of ways for teachers to advance to higher salary levels throughout their career. The text following each recommendation is often explanatory and/or suggestive of how a recommendation might

be implemented. It was not explicitly adopted by the committee.

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educators understand the standards as well as guideposts for selecting and offering effective, standards-based professional development. The state should provide technical assistance grants to schools and districts demonstrating the most need.

5. Ensure that schools and educators have regional access to research-based professional development information as well as best practices for teaching and learning.
6. Ensure that schools and educators have regional access to highly qualified providers and that a coordinating entity exists to ensure regional capacity and accountability.
7. Pilot an individual professional development process for Individual Professional Development plans and report results of the pilot to the State Board of Education by August 2008.
8. Ensure that professional development is considered as part of any state policy initiative or mandate that impacts the classroom in a substantive way and provide additional funding for the professional development to properly implement and deliver these new initiatives and mandates.

Teacher Compensation Recommendations

9. Establish a minimum teaching salary.
10. Provide substantial performance pay opportunities.
11. Expand Career Ladder to all districts.
12. Provide incentives to teach in hard-to-staff schools.
13. Research viability and possible pay levels for differential pay.

Professional Development Recommendations

Professional Development Defined

Effective professional development is job related and models the context, processes, and content by which educators acquire, enhance, and sustain the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs necessary to create high levels of learning for all students.

Source: The Governor's Committee on Teacher Quality and Support, October 3, 2005

Recommendation 1: Adopt the National Staff Development Council's "Standards for Staff Development." *[Note: See Appendix D]*

The National Staff Development Council's (NSDC's) standards are noted as the premier standards for professional development. Revised in 2001, these standards have been adopted by many states, school districts, and other organizations that design and conduct professional development. Therefore, the committee found them to be an excellent guide as was *Cultivating High-Quality Professional Development* (Exstrom, 2002). The adoption of a set of standards is more than a symbolic act; the standards function as

policy and anchor implementation. Determining the role of the state in professional development can be difficult because states are just one of many stakeholders (districts, schools, principals, teachers, parents, etc). However, by adopting the standards the state assumes leadership. The implementation that follows provides changes in policy, incentives, and resources to ensure that all teachers throughout the state have access to high-quality professional development. At this time 35 states have written standards for professional development (“Stat of the Week,” 2005).

The standards encompass the content, context, and process upon which effective professional development is based. They are research-based, data-driven, job-embedded, and results-oriented. These components have been shown to drive a high quality, effective professional development effort that leads to changes in teacher behavior that then can produce greater student achievement, the ultimate goal of any professional development.

Currently the TQS Committee is developing a set of indicators. The indicators are evidence that teachers and educational leaders are following the standards. These will aid school personnel in interpreting and implementing the professional development standards.

Recommendation 2: Establish within the state Board of Education a Professional Standards Board to oversee the policy development of the NSDC “Standards for Staff Development” and guide implementation of standards in the field.

The State Board of Education is entrusted with the responsibility of adopting statewide policies relating to education standards. Because standards should be integrated into the educational infrastructure, the State Board of Education is the appropriate place to house the professional development standards. Here, the standards should not only reside but be integrated where appropriate to ensure full alignment with the state’s teaching and learning standards and other policy initiatives.

A Professional Standards Board could be the unit within the State Board of Education that would oversee and guide implementation of the standards. The board’s responsibilities might include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Assist school districts in adopting and implementing the professional development standards;
- Assess new state laws and mandates, new or revised teaching or learning standards, or State Board rules or programs for needed professional development;
- Develop and implement an evaluation plan for assessing all professional development sponsored by the state and making an adaptation of that plan available to school districts for assessing their own professional development;
- Submit each year an agenda and budget for professional development statewide; and
- Periodically assess the state of professional development throughout Arizona and make recommendations for its improvement.

The composition of the Professional Standards Board, its location, and its exact duties are yet to be determined. [Note: See Recommendation 3.] However, the committee feels strongly that a single entity should have authority over implementation while governance issues are being addressed; and the State Board of Education, with its constitutional duties related to education policy, seems the obvious place to start.

Recommendation 3: Study immediately the possibility of a comprehensive statewide Professional Standards Board. In addition to professional development, the scope of the board's responsibilities could include certification, licensure, oversight of the teaching standards, testing, professional development, teacher preparation, and recruitment. The committee shall study the scope and functions, structure, authority, timeline and other implementation issues of a Professional Standards Board and forward a recommendation in 2006.

As noted above, the committee recognizes the need for a policy and implementation unit that is responsible for implementing the NSDC's "Standards for Staff Development." At the same time, members recognize the potential such a board holds for creating an aligned system of governance that considers teacher certification, licensure, compensation, and other aspects of teachers' professional lives. In recent years Arizona has received weak marks regarding the governance of the teaching profession and its ongoing inaction on a number of indicators of teacher quality. What sort of agency best oversees these career functions and how the functions are carried out are yet to be determined, but the need for stronger governance is clear. Therefore, the committee will conduct a study of how Professional Standards Boards are structured and how they function. If such a group appears to be both desirable and feasible in Arizona, the committee will make such a recommendation in 2006.

Recommendation 4: Phase in the professional development standards over time to allow the state to build the resources and infrastructure necessary to support schools and educators. The state should immediately provide technical assistance to help educators understand the standards as well as guideposts for selecting and offering effective, standards-based professional development. The state should provide technical assistance grants to schools and districts demonstrating the most need.

Since there has been no statewide system of professional development in Arizona, such an initiative must be phased in slowly. To facilitate the standards as a support tool and not just another mandate, the state needs to offer technical assistance to educators in adopting and implementing the standards. Note that not all districts need assistance. Some have already adopted the NSDC standards and established quality professional development programs within their districts. For example, as required by law, most Career Ladder districts base their professional development on student performance and need and focus on student improvement. Though they may not have adopted the NSDC standards verbatim, their teacher improvement processes model these standards. Most districts, however, have not developed their professional experiences to such a level and

should be provided technical assistance in understanding and using standards-based professional development.

The TQS Committee anticipates the following benefits of quality professional development throughout the state:

- Greater access to quality professional development for all educators, including those in rural areas;
- More support for beginning teachers through induction and mentoring programs;
- Increased opportunities for veteran teachers to strengthen their knowledge and skills through Individual Professional Development Plans tied to school and district plans as well as licensing renewal;
- Higher retention rates for both new and experienced teachers; and
- An increase in the number of highly qualified teachers in the state.

And, of course, the TQS Committee anticipates that increasing the quality of teachers in the state will, over time, lead to an increase in students who are performing at the proficient or standard level or above on NAEP and AIMS tests, respectively.

Recommendation 5: Ensure that schools and educators have regional access to research-based professional development information as well as best practices for teaching and learning.

Professional development providers and educators alike need access to research-based resources. Not only does this ensure efficient use of limited dollars, it enhances the ability of educators to increase student learning. Much like medicine evolved, teaching is becoming more embedded in the science of what works for which students under certain circumstances. Arizona is missing a formal effort to align research with the every day practice of teachers and principals.

The suggested repository for such information is a center whose mission is to gather the most current information and disseminate it to educators and providers throughout the state. One possible approach to establishing such a center is to give this charge to an existing agency or organization. Another is for the state to issue a request for proposal (RFP). Interested organizations can then apply in a competitive process. The RFP would list criteria for establishment of a center, one of which would be having an Advisory Board that includes representatives from the state's research universities. The RFP would also outline the vision, mission, and goals of the center. The center would be funded for an extended period of time (e.g., three to five years), with annual renewal based on performance.

Recommendation 6: Ensure that schools and educators have regional access to highly qualified providers and that a coordinating entity exists to ensure regional capacity and accountability.

Engaging professional development providers should not be the result of a good sales pitch. Schools must have a reliable list of public and private providers as well as regional access to quality providers and a process that eliminates vendors who are not aligned with state teaching, academic, and professional development standards. Vendors must demonstrate that they adhere to the standards and that their professional development is effective. The TQS Committee shall identify a process to create a list of providers from which schools can comfortably and reliably choose. One possible approach is to have all interested entities, including universities, community colleges, county offices, and Arizona's K-12 Center, register and demonstrate their capacity for delivering quality professional development.

One of the possible duties of a Professional Standards Board is to serve as the coordinating agency mentioned above and ensure that even schools in the most remote areas of the state have access to quality professional development.

Recommendation 7: Pilot an individual professional development process for Individual Professional Development plans and report results of the pilot to the State Board of Education by August 2008.

Local district implementation of the NSDC standards should lead districts to develop district-wide professional development plans, school plans, and Individual Professional Development Plans (IPDPs). Each teacher or other educator, such as a principal, completes an IPDP in conjunction with his/her supervisor as a component of a comprehensive performance review process. An IPDP specifies the knowledge that the educator needs to acquire and/or the skills that he/she needs to develop based on student assessment data, teacher self-evaluations, and state and district teaching and learning goals. IPDPs are aligned with the goals of the school and district while providing individuals the opportunity to direct some of their plan to personal goals. Such a process ensures that the professional development process is based on the needs of students, stems from teachers' needs, and is integrated at all levels – individual, school, and district.

The TQS Committee is interested in seeing how IPDPs can be used in a way that does not create unnecessary administrative burdens for teachers or require additional reporting for similar tasks required for teachers to retain their teaching license. Though the committee has not discussed what licensure renewal should look like or whether it endorses the Arizona Department of Education's current recommendations, members believe that an IPDP can facilitate helping teachers document all of their various requirements in a single reporting format. The committee is aware that many school districts in Arizona are already using IPDPs as part of their Career Ladder or pay-for-performance planning. With a desire to avoid any duplication of effort, the committee recommends that the state pilot an IPDP, school, and district planning process in one or more districts. The focus of

the pilot would be on how to incorporate an IPDP into a performance review process that is based on school and district goals as well as using the IPDP for licensure renewal and to help teachers plan for and obtain the professional development needed to improve teaching and increase learning. After a two-year pilot, there should be sufficient data to indicate whether use of IPDP can be a valuable component for licensing renewal and whether statewide implementation of a comprehensive professional development planning process is warranted.

Recommendation 8: Ensure that professional development is considered as part of any state policy initiative or mandate that impacts the classroom in a substantive way and provide additional funding for the professional development to properly implement and deliver these new initiatives and mandates.

Timely integration of state policy initiatives and mandates into school sites is essential. However, schools should not be expected to implement new programs and processes without professional development. Asking schools and educators to do something different and not making sure that they have the knowledge, skills, and resources to do new things well is tantamount to asking for failure. Currently no system exists to ensure that educators are prepared to deliver changes intended to improve student learning or that professional development provided internally or by external vendors is aligned with the mandate, best practices, and/or standards. Teachers in the field have noted that professional development related to the academic standards is not consistently offered statewide and often does not include the follow-up needed to ensure that standards are indeed being implemented.

State mandates need to acknowledge that professional development often is essential and that the state will assist in the provision of that professional development through technical assistance and/or full or partial funding.

Teacher Compensation Recommendations

Recommendation 9: Establish a minimum teaching salary.

Establishing and funding a minimum beginning teacher salary is one strategy to attract individuals to teaching and to level the opportunity for all districts to attract the best teaching candidates.

Current disparities in starting pay give some districts advantage over others in recruiting and retaining teachers. Often an urban district can offer a starting salary that exceeds what teachers can make in a rural district with many years of experience. The state average of \$28,218 (Arizona Education Association, 2005) means that many teachers, most outside of Maricopa County, start well below this average, which makes recruiting high caliber professionals difficult.

Further, the committee feels strongly that the state must provide a beginning wage commensurate with what other teachers make and competitive with other professions

(e.g., accountants, registered nurses, physical therapists) requiring a similar amount of education and experience. Equity is necessary to attract bright, talented, and committed teachers into the field. Establishing and funding a minimum beginning salary is one way to level the opportunity for all schools to attract the best teaching candidates and eliminate the disincentives that push beginning teachers to take jobs outside the state. Tackling base pay will lead to the broadest impact.

Having a starting salary of \$35,000 (Arizona Town Hall, 2004) will help keep new teachers in Arizona and can provide prospective teachers an incentive to choose teaching as a career. This figure is higher than the national average of \$29,733 (National Education Association, 2005) and should give Arizona a bit of an edge. On the national level, the National Education Association advocates a \$40,000 minimum beginning salary, which does now exist in some districts across the country (National Education Association, 2005) although none in Arizona. At a minimum, the committee suggests that the Governor start Arizona teachers at the national minimum of all professionals (\$35,000).

There is one concern related to increasing base pay: The TQS Committee wants to avoid salary compression that would allow little differentiation between the pay of veteran teachers and new teachers. Therefore, the TQS Committee requests that economic forecasting be done to project salary levels for teachers, especially for veteran teachers, after the implementation of a minimum starting salary. Such a study should consider subject areas and the salaries of other professionals in recommending salary levels.

Recommendation 10: Provide substantial performance pay opportunities.

Goals of Effective Performance-Based Compensation Systems

- Continuous improvement of instruction
- A collaborative teaching environment
- Incentives for educators to increase their knowledge and skills and to assume leadership roles
- Competitive salaries
- Advancement of district and school goals
- Increased collaborative relationships between and among internal and external stakeholder groups (the school board, the Arizona Education Association, teachers and administrators, Arizona Department of Education, etc.)

Source: Adapted from the Principles for Performance Based Compensation Systems, Arizona Education Association. Presented by Andrew Morrill to the Governor's Committee on Teacher Quality and Support, August 15, 2005

This recommendation embodies two issues that need to be addressed. The first is the level of financing of pay-for-performance provisions funded by the Proposition 301 sales tax. The amount of funding tied to performance is not significant enough in all cases to generate true incentives. Thus, the TQS committee recommends increased funding for pay-for-performance provisions. The second

issue is how pay-for-performance is defined. Is it based on the performance of a school, department, or team? Is it tied to the performance of individual teachers? Or, perhaps both individual and team performance? Whatever system used needs to promote high performance for individual teachers in the attainment of classroom, school, and district goals.

Recommendation 11: Expand Career Ladder to all districts.

Career Ladder is a nationally recognized program that combines classroom achievement of students and professional development goals with compensation tiers to create a system that uses data-driven professional development and rewards teachers for the achievement of their students. The committee believes strongly that the state should ensure this program is open to all districts and that all participate.

The 28 districts that have the Career Ladder program have more money available to them for pay generally and performance pay specifically. In keeping with the recommendations of Governor Jane Dee Hull's Committee on Efficiency and Accountability (2001), the committee agrees that this inequitable situation cannot be allowed to continue. Therefore, the committee supports expanding Career Ladder opportunities statewide as the infrastructure for an investment that encompasses key strategies to improve student performance and to achieve a higher level of teacher retention.

Recommendation 12: Provide incentives to teach in hard-to-staff schools.

There is no question that schools that are poor and/or located in rural areas have more difficulty recruiting quality teachers. Although pay is only one factor that might attract a teacher to such a school, it is a major one. Other incentives include a one-time hiring bonus, assistance in securing housing, a commuting allowance, or scholarships or payment of student loans, all of which require additional funds. These incentives would be available to any teacher being recruited for placement in a high poverty or rural school that has difficulty attracting teachers. Additional monies for these schools will level the recruitment field. Otherwise, large urban districts with better working and living conditions will continue to have advantages over poor and rural districts.

Recommendation 13: Research viability and possible pay levels for differential pay.

It is common in the marketplace for individuals in similar careers to be compensated differently based on their area of expertise and their availability. While there is some concern about the application of differential pay to the teaching profession, the TQS Committee believes that the issue merits further exploration as a possible remedy for teacher shortages in certain subject areas (e.g., special education, mathematics, science, and non-native English language instruction). A study of the need for differential pay in Arizona (based on projections of supply and demand), the degree to which additional pay would be an incentive to teachers in areas of short supply, and the cultural changes required to institute differential pay will give the committee a better idea of whether this approach is a viable one for the state.

NEXT STEPS

As indicated at the beginning of this report, these recommendations are preliminary and much more remains to be done. Here are some next steps:

The TQS Committee has agreed in these recommendations to do the following:

- Develop and field test indicators for the NSDC's "Standards for Professional Development."
- Conduct a study of the desirability and feasibility of establishing a Professional Standards Board.
- Identify a process for certifying professional development providers.
- Pilot the development and use of an Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) that is an integral part of a district's performance review process. The IPDP should be based on school and district goals as well as serving as needed documentation for license renewal.
- Oversee an economic forecasting study to project salary levels for beginning and veteran teachers over a period of time. The goal is determining what actions to take to prevent salary compression for career teachers and to ensure that teacher wages are competitive with other professions.
- Investigate the feasibility and desirability of differential pay for teachers of subject areas in short supply.
- Explore the feasibility and desirability of programs that put teachers in private industry during the summer and that have industry paying part of retirees' salaries if they go into teaching (at Governor Napolitano's request).

The recommendations will continue to be vetted:

A substantial number of private individuals and representatives of interested Arizona organizations have spoken during the public comment of the committee's meetings. In addition, the Governor's Education Advisor and various members of the TQS Committee have presented the recommendations to many different groups; the recommendations have been posted on the Governor's Web site for comment; and statewide radio and print media have reported on the recommendations. Although the committee believes that there is widespread support for these recommendations, it needs to continue to solicit input from stakeholders as the recommendations evolve and others are forthcoming.

Organizations Providing Input into the Recommendations

APPLE – Arizona Parents for Public Education
Arizona Administrators Association
Arizona Association of School Business Officials
Arizona Association of University Women
Arizona and Business Education Coalition
Arizona Science Coordinators Association
Charter School Association
Education Subcommittee of the Governor's Ethnic
Minority Councils
Governor's P-20 Council
Greater Phoenix Educational Management Council

The TQS Committee will continue to fulfill its charge: The committee needs to complete its recommendations regarding compensation and professional development. It also needs to address teacher recruitment and preparation. Members acknowledge a teacher development continuum beginning with recruitment and extending throughout the professional life of a teacher and other educators. Recruitment and teacher preparation are equally as important as professional development and teacher compensation. All points on the continuum must be addressed, and making a change at one point of that continuum affects other points. Ultimately the committee will want to make sure its recommendations are aligned and support each other, creating a system that responds to education reform and community needs for many generations to come.

As an advisory council to the Governor, the TQS Committee has turned the product of its 2005 deliberations over to the Governor for her consideration. Actions taken related to these recommendations will be reported as part of the September 2006 follow-up report.

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APPENDIX A:
EXECUTIVE ORDER 2005-11 AND 2005-23

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APPENDIX D:

NSDC STANDARDS FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT, (REVISED, 2001)

Context Standards

Staff development that improves the learning of all students:

- Organizes adults into learning communities whose goals are aligned with those of the school and district. (Learning Communities)
- Requires skillful school and district leaders who guide continuous instructional improvement. (Leadership)
- Requires resources to support adult learning and collaboration. (Resources)

Process Standards

Staff development that improves the learning of all students:

- Uses disaggregated student data to determine adult learning priorities, monitor progress, and help sustain continuous improvement. (Data-Driven)
- Uses multiple sources of information to guide improvement and demonstrate its impact. (Evaluation)
- Prepares educators to apply research to decision making. (Research-Based)
- Uses learning strategies appropriate to the intended goal. (Design)
- Applies knowledge about human learning and change. (Learning)
- Provides educators with the knowledge and skills to collaborate. (Collaboration)

Content Standards

Staff development that improves the learning of all students:

- Prepares educators to understand and appreciate all students, create safe, orderly and supportive learning environments, and hold high expectations for their academic achievement. (Equity)
- Deepens educators' content knowledge, provides them with research-based instructional strategies to assist students in meeting rigorous academic standards, and prepares them to use various types of classroom assessments appropriately. (Quality Teaching)
- Provides educators with knowledge and skills to involve families and other stakeholders appropriately. (Family Involvement)